

# COVERT D<sup>0</sup> AND PRENOMINAL *Cel* IN ROMANIAN

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The Romanian definite article marker, as that of other languages, is argued to have more than one morphological form. In Romanian, the morphological forms are claimed to be the suffix (also referred to as *-L*) and the free-form/standing morpheme *cel*<sup>1</sup>. The suffix and the free-form occur DP-initially and seem to contribute a definite reading to the DP. Due to these distribution facts, it has been argued by Cornilescu (1992, 2004) and Grosu (1994), that the Romanian definite article, base-generated in D<sup>0</sup>, is spelled out either as the suffix *-L* or as the free-form *cel*, which, according to Cornilescu (2004), is used as a last resort mechanism when the suffix *-L* cannot cliticize to an appropriate host.

In this paper, I argue that the Romanian definite article in D<sup>0</sup> has only one morphologically overt instantiation: the definite article suffix *-L*. In constructions with prenominal *cel* the definite D<sup>0</sup> is covert. Specifically, the present paper makes the following claims: (1) *cel* is not a definite article in D<sup>0</sup>; (2) prenominal *cel* and the XP following it form a constituent, *celP*, that is adjoined below D<sup>0</sup> in the same position as demonstratives; and (3) *celP* can license a [+def.] feature in D<sup>0</sup>, a mechanism independently needed to account for the distribution of demonstratives. In addition, this article provides a rather detailed map of the articulated left periphery of the Romanian DP and the multiple syntactic positions available to the different elements.

## 1. The Romanian Definite Article and Working Assumptions

The prototypical definite article in Romanian is expressed by a syntactic enclitic/suffix that can attach to nouns, as in (1a) below, or to prenominal adjectives, as in (1b). The suffix agrees in person, number and gender with the head noun and it precedes the case suffix.

In previous research, Cornilescu (1992, 1995), Dobrovie-Sorin (1987) and Giusti (1995), among others, argue that the definite suffix is base generated in D<sup>0</sup> and its suffixation on the noun is the result of N<sup>0</sup> to D<sup>0</sup> movement while the suffixation on adjectives is the result of AP to Spec/DP movement. Conversely, Ungureanu (2003, 2006, 2009) argues that DP-internal movement of nouns and adjectives that surface prenominal, in the left periphery of the DP, is head-movement ruled by the Head Movement Constraint proposed in Travis (1984). The present work adopts the latter analysis exposed below.

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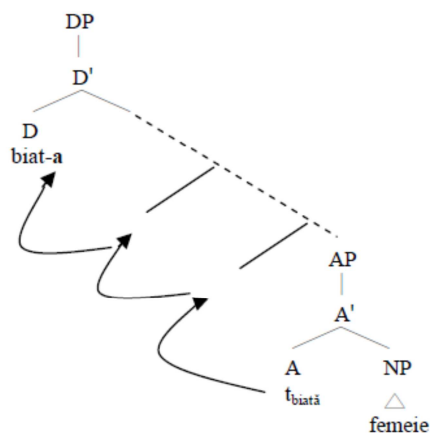
<sup>1</sup> In addition to its prenominal position, *cel* can also occur pronominally and postnominally. In the latter case *cel* must co-occur with an instance of the definite article suffix. Due to space limitations, I only discuss prenominal *cel* in this article; however, the analysis proposed here can be unified with an analysis of postnominal *cel*.

### 1.1 Head Movement to D<sup>0</sup>

The background assumptions of the present work are the following. In Romanian DPs with an overt definite article suffix/enclitic, the suffixation of the definite article on nouns or adjectives is obtained by noun or adjective head movement: N<sup>0</sup> to D<sup>0</sup> or A<sup>0</sup> to D<sup>0</sup> movement. Furthermore, an adjective that can only surface prenominal (call it an A<sup>0</sup><sub>A</sub> for expository purposes) is a head within the nominal projection and is generated in a prenominal position, in the left periphery of the DP.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, in the presence of an A<sup>0</sup><sub>A</sub>, head movement of the noun to D<sup>0</sup> is blocked by the intervening A<sup>0</sup><sub>A</sub>, resulting in a violation of the Head Movement Constraint, thus the ungrammaticality of (1c). In the presence of an A<sup>0</sup><sub>A</sub> the adjective moves to D<sup>0</sup>, not the noun. A syntactic tree for the DP in (1b), depicting A<sup>0</sup> to D<sup>0</sup> movement is provided in (2) below.

- (1) a. femei -a  
 woman -the  
 'the woman'
- b. biat -a femeie  
 wretched -the woman  
 'the wretched woman'
- c. \*femei -a biată  
 woman -the wretched  
 'the wretched woman'

(2) A<sup>0</sup> to D<sup>0</sup>



<sup>2</sup> In Romanian, adjectives have different distributional patterns within the DP in terms of their surface position relative to the noun and their ability to bear the definite article. Certain adjectives, to which I refer here as AP<sub>A</sub>, always surface prenominal and can bear the definite article while other adjectives mainly or only surface postnominal (to which I refer here as AP<sub>B/C</sub>). For a detailed analysis of Romanian adjectives consider Ungureanu (2003, 2006 and 2009).

## 2. The Syntactic Distribution of Prenominal *cel*

Prenominal *cel* occurs in the left periphery of the DP and can only immediately precede numeral expressions such as cardinals, as in (3a), and vague adjectival numerals, as in (3b).<sup>3</sup> Importantly, prenominal *cel* cannot immediately precede other elements such as adjectives (neither prenominal, AP<sub>AS</sub>, nor the type that can also occur postnominally) or nouns, as in (3c, d).

- (3) a. **cele** trei fete  
cel three girls  
'the three girls'
- b. **cele** câteva/prea puține flori adapted from Cornilescu (1992)  
cel few / too few flowers  
'the few/too few flowers'
- c. \***cele** biete / frumoase fete  
cel wretched/beautiful girls  
'the wretched girls'
- d. \***cele** fete  
cel girls  
'the girls'

Note that the DPs in (3a, b) receive a definite interpretation although there is no overt instantiation of the definite article suffix or of any other definite element. Crucially, in the absence of *cel* these DPs receive an indefinite interpretation. This observation suggests that the presence of prenominal *cel* is somehow linked to the definiteness of these DPs.

Finally, let us consider prenominal *cel* in superlative constructions. Here we make a distinction between the *cel* discussed so far (henceforth regular *cel*) and *cel* in superlative constructions. Romanian superlative constructions are formed by *cel* followed by the comparative construction. Superlative expressions can occur prenominally, as in (4), and postnominally, where they can precede or follow the complement of the noun. In (4), superlative *cel* seems to appear in the same position as the regular prenominal *cel*; however, I show in section 6. that this is not the case. Moreover, the categories that can immediately follow the superlative expression of *cel* include elements that cannot immediately follow regular *cel*, specifically adjectives (typically postnominal AP<sub>B/C</sub>). Due to these and other differences between regular prenominal and superlative *cel*, these two instances of *cel* are treated separately.

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<sup>3</sup> The term “vague adjectival numeral” is taken from Zamparelli (1996) and it identifies quantity denoting expressions in their adjectival/cardinal use as opposed to quantifiers. Note that in Cornilescu (1992) the cardinals and the cardinality expressions *prea puțini*, ‘too few’, *prea mulți* ‘too many’ and *câteva* ‘a few’ are treated as quantifiers.

- (4) cea mai frumoasă poză a Mariei  
 cel more beautiful picture of Mary  
 'the most beautiful picture of Mary'

### 3. The morphology of *cel*

Here I demonstrate that prenominal *cel* is not synchronically composed by *ce* and the definite suffix [-L], in D<sup>0</sup>, as was proposed in the literature. Rather, its misleading form is a diachronic vestige as shown in Coene (2004).

One of the reasons *cel* is claimed to be in D<sup>0</sup> is that it appears to be morphologically composed of the invariable root/stem *ce* 'what' and the definite article suffix -L 'the'. Just like the definite suffix -L, *cel* agrees in number, gender and case with the head noun. However, the misleading morphological composition of *cel* is historically motivated. Coene (2004) shows that *cel* descends historically from the Latin demonstrative pronoun of distance *ille* preceded by the demonstrative adverb *ecce*. Following diachronic changes, a form like the classical Latin *ecce-illum* evolved to modern Romanian *cel* (sg. masculine); and *ecce-illam* to *cea* (sg. feminine). Thus, the apparent morphological composition of *cel* as *ce-D* is a vestige of the Latin demonstrative form.

Even synchronically, *cel* and the distal demonstrative *acel* 'that' are very similar, as portrayed in (5), and *acel* 'that' also misleadingly appears to be morphologically composed by *ace-L*. In fact, the only difference between the *cel* and the *acel* forms is the invariant initial vowel *a* in the demonstrative forms.

- (5) cel and the distal demonstrative
- |     |            |               |
|-----|------------|---------------|
|     | ce-l       | demonstrative |
| SG. | masc. ce-l | a-ce-l        |
|     | fem. ce-a  | a-ce-a        |
| PL. | masc. ce-i | a-ce-i        |
|     | fem. ce-le | a-cel-e       |

Crucially, however, there is no evidence, to my knowledge, that modern Romanian demonstratives and *cel* include the discrete morphological definite suffix -L. It would be difficult to maintain this assumption, given that Romanian demonstratives and prenominal *cel* can be preceded by the definite article suffix -L, which is generally accepted to occupy D<sup>0</sup>. Moreover, as I show in subsequent sections, prenominal *cel* and demonstratives exhibit syntactic similarities other than this morphological similarity. It can be then assumed that *cel* does most probably not contain the definite suffix. Thus, let us construe for now that *cel* does not include the definite article suffix -L, given the evidence from the historical evolution of *cel* and *cel*'s similarities with the synchronic forms of the distal demonstrative.

### 3. *Cel* Lacks Morpho-Syntactic Properties Associated with D<sup>0</sup>

As noted in Grosu (1994), *cel* lacks a crucial syntactic property/function associated with the Romanian definite article *-L* generated in D<sup>0</sup> – that of assigning morphological case. According to Grosu (1994), genitive possessors can only be licensed by a token of the definite suffix *-L*, which can assign morphological genitive case under two conditions: government and adjacency. In (6a), all conditions for morphological genitive case assignment are satisfied; therefore, the possessor bears morphological genitive marking. Crucial to this analysis is the ungrammaticality of (6b), which is triggered by the absence of the definite article in the main DP: the head noun, *Ștefan*, does not bear the definite article necessary to license the possessor. However, (6b) can be rendered grammatical by simply inserting the complex genitive assigning element *a+L* in front of the possessor phrase, as in (6c), which is the grammatical counterpart of (6b). Grosu's (1994) proposal also explains the ungrammaticality of (6d) (the ungrammatical counterpart of (6a)). Because all conditions for case assignment by *-L* in D<sup>0</sup> are fulfilled, "*a+L* may not be used (in the kind of construction under consideration) if it is not needed for overt genitive Case assignment and is, thus, disallowed when a bona fide definite article fulfills the conditions for GEN Case assignment...".

- (6) a. Portretu -l rege -l -ui  
Portrait -L king -L -GEN  
'the portrait of the king'
- b. \*Ștefan Moldov -ei  
Stephen Moldova -GEN  
'Stephen of Moldova'
- c. Portretu -l acesta a -L rege-l -ui  
portrait -L this of -L king-L-GEN  
'this portrait of the king'
- d. \*Portretu -l a -L rege -l -ui  
portrait -L of-L king -L -GEN  
'the portrait of the king'

Crucially, the distribution of *cel* in terms of genitive case assignment is complementary to that of the definite article *-L*. That is, *cel* cannot assign morphological genitive case even if it governs and is adjacent to the possessor, as evidenced by the ungrammatical options in (7a). To salvage the derivation, the genitive assigning preposition *aL* must be inserted, as in (7b).

- (7) a. \*cea ta / Mari -ei / profesoru -l -ui  
cel your / Mary-theG / professor -the -G  
'Your's / Mary's / the professor's'

- b. cea a ta / Mari-ei /profesoru -l -ui  
 cel of-L your / Mary-D (gen)/ professor -the -G  
 ‘Your’s /Mary’s / the professor’s’

In contrast to the present proposal, Grosu (1994) claims that *cel* is the morphologically complex form *ce* + *-L* (the definite article suffix) in  $D^0$ . This requires him to assume that *cel* is neutralized in its “categorial specifications” and/or in “the functional/categorial distinction”. Thus, to explain (7), Grosu (1994) must include additional constraints in his formulation of *-L*’s case assignment properties: “GEN case assignment is not a property of the mere morpheme *-L* (as I earlier maintained in Grosu 1988a), but of *-L* qua  $D$ , and – more generally – qua syntactic category.” Conversely, under the present proposal no additional constraints are necessary: *cel* is missing functional properties of the definite determiner in  $D^0$  because *cel* is not in the  $D^0$  position.

#### 4. *cel* is below $D^0$

Next, I argue that prenominal *cel* is in one of two positions – below  $D^0$  – reserved for prenominal *cel*. Here I introduce data that was not discussed by other authors, to my knowledge, where prenominal *cel* cooccurs with – and follows – a bona fide instance of the definite article suffix in  $D^0$ . I further claim that superlative *cel* also occurs below  $D^0$ , based on the cooccurrence of prenominal superlative *cel* with regular prenominal *cel* and demonstratives.

One of the main arguments for analyzing *cel* as an instance of  $D^0$  comes from the fact that the indefinite versus definite reading of a DP with a cardinal or prenominal vague adjectival numeral is overtly distinguished only by the presence or absence of *cel*. Thus, it appears that prenominal *cel* is the source of definiteness and hence an instance of  $D^0$ . This hypothesis makes three predictions: (1) prenominal *cel* cannot cooccur with the definite article suffix in  $D^0$ ; (2) only one prenominal *cel* can occur within a DP; and (3) if prenominal *cel* cooccurs with a demonstrative, prenominal *cel* precedes the demonstrative. The third prediction relies on the assumption that demonstratives are generated in a position below  $D^0$ , as argued in Cornilescu (1992) and Ungureanu (2003, 2006, 2009). As I show next, none of these predictions is borne out.

Let us start with the first inaccurate prediction: *cel* cannot cooccur with a definite article suffix in  $D^0$ . In fact, prenominal *cel* can cooccur with the definite article suffix, as illustrated in (8a). Here, the definite article suffix hosted by the adjective precedes the prenominal instance of regular *cel*. Assuming the DP position and head movement of  $A^0_A$  structure proposed in section 1, the definite suffix hosted by  $A^0_A$  is in  $D^0$ . Thus, in (8a),  $D^0$  is occupied by  $A^0_A+D^0$  and prenominal *cel* is in a lower position. The DP in (8b) shows that prenominal *cel* obligatorily follows the definite article hosted by the adjective. Furthermore, (8c) provides evidence that the definite article hosted by the adjective is indeed an instance of  $D^0$  since the possessor can only bear morphological genitive case and the use of the case assigning preposition *aL* results in ungrammaticality.

That is, the definite suffix on  $A^0_A$  has the case assigning property associated with the  $D^0$  position, and is, therefore, in  $D^0$ .

- (8) a. biete -le cele două fete  
wretched -the cel two girls  
'the wretched two girls'
- b. \*cele (două) biete -le fete  
cel two wretched -the girls  
'the wretched two girls'
- c. biete -le (\*ale) mele fete  
wretched -the of-L my girls  
'my wretched girls'

The second inaccurate prediction made by the '*cel* in  $D^0$ ' hypothesis is that there can only be one pronominal *cel* within a DP. Crucially, in the grammatical example (9a) there are two instances of pronominal *cel*: regular *cel* and superlative *cel*. Even if the first *cel* is in  $D^0$ , the second one cannot also be an instance of  $D^0$ , assuming that there is only one  $D^0$  per DP. Therefore, at least one of the two instances of *cel* must be in a syntactic position below  $D^0$  accommodating at least the superlative *cel* or the phrase of which superlative *cel* is part. The ungrammaticality of (9b) shows that superlative *cel* must follow regular pronominal *cel* and regular pronominal *cel* must follow the definite article, c.f. (8a) (8b). It follows that there are at least two positions below  $D^0$  that can be occupied by the regular and the superlative pronominal *cel*. This claim is supported by the grammaticality of (9c).

- (9) a. ?cele două cele mai frumoase fete  
cel two cel more beautiful girls  
'the two most beautiful girls'
- b. \*cele mai frumoase cele două fete  
cel more beautiful cel two girls  
'the two most beautiful girls'
- c. ?biete -le cele două cele mai frumoase fete  
wretched-the cel two cel more beautiful girls  
'the two most beautiful wretched girls'

Finally, the third inaccurate prediction made by the '*cel* in  $D^0$ ' hypothesis is that, if pronominal *cel* cooccurs with the demonstrative, *cel* must precede the demonstrative. Remarkably, in (10a), the pronominal superlative *cel* does cooccur with the demonstrative; however, superlative *cel* must follow the demonstrative, as indicated by the grammaticality variation between (10a) and (10b). Assuming that the demonstrative is generated below  $D^0$ , as in Cornilescu

(1992) and Ungureanu (2003, 2006 and 2009), it must be the case that prenominal superlative *cel* is also in a position below  $D^0$ .

- (10) a. ?aceste cele mai recente articole  
           these cel more recent articles  
           ‘these most recent articles’
- b. \*cele mai recente aceste articole  
           cel more recent these articles  
           ‘these most recent articles’

### 5. The Syntactic Constituent *celP*

In this section, I argue that prenominal *cel* forms a discrete constituent with the immediately following phrase. For expository purposes, let us call the resulting phrase *celP*. Evidence for the *celP* hypothesis consists of the following: (1) no other element can intervene between *cel* and a cardinal (or vague adjectival numeral), (2) DP internal movement bypasses the [*cel*- cardinal] sequence as a unit, and (3) the [*cel* – cardinal] sequence has the distribution of a constituent.

Recall that prenominal *cel* must be immediately followed by a cardinal numeral or a vague adjectival numeral; thus, other elements, such as prenominal adjectives, can never intervene between *cel* and the cardinal/vague adjectival numeral. Interestingly, this is a property particular to *cel* among prenominal elements: the demonstrative, in SpecDetP (a functional phrase just below DP), and the definite article, in  $D^0$ , can also be immediately followed by prenominal adjectives or nouns, in addition to cardinals and vague adjectival numerals, and the definite article can be immediately followed by the demonstrative.<sup>4</sup> As observed by Cornilescu (1992), the demonstrative can be followed either by an [ $AP_A$  – cardinal] sequence or by a [cardinal –  $AP_A$ ] sequence as in (11a) and (11b). Conversely, *cel* can only be immediately followed by a numeral and never by an  $AP_A$  c.f. (11c) and (11d). Since the order of the cardinal and the  $AP_A$  is not interchangeable following prenominal *cel*, as in (11d), that is, the  $AP_A$  may not intervene between *cel* and the the cardinal, it can be posited that *cel* and the cardinal form a syntactic constituent, a phrase.

- (11) a. acești doi foști președinți  
           these two former presidents  
           ‘these two former presidents’
- b. acești foști doi președinți  
           these former two presidents  
           ‘these two former presidents’

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<sup>4</sup> For further arguments regarding the syntactic position of demonstratives and other prenominal elements, I refer the reader to Ungureanu (2003, 2006 and 2009).



- c. cei doi foști președinți  
cel two former presidents  
'the two former presidents'
- d. \*cei foști doi președinți  
cel former two presidents  
'the two former presidents'

AP<sub>AS</sub> and cardinals can also switch places immediately following an overt definite article hosted by an adjective, but cannot do so in the presence of prenominal *cel*. In (12a, b) the order of the cardinal and of the in situ (second) AP<sub>A</sub> can switch. Conversely, in the presence of prenominal *cel*, only the [cardinal – AP<sub>A</sub>] word-order is available, c.f. (12c) and (12d). Here, *cel* must immediately precede the cardinal. If the AP<sub>A</sub> intervenes between *cel* and the cardinal, the DP is ungrammatical. The data in (11) and (12) show that [demonstrative – cardinal] and [definite article – cardinal] sequences can be interrupted by another element; however, the [*cel* – cardinal] sequence cannot. I take these observations to suggest that the [*cel* – cardinal] string forms a discrete constituent within the DP, call it *celP*.

- (12) a. bieți -i doi foști președinți  
wretched -the two former presidents  
'the wretched two former presidents'
- b. bieți -i foști doi președinți  
wretched-the former two presidents  
'the wretched two former presidents'
- c. bieți -i cei doi foști președinți  
wretched -the cei two former presidents  
'the wretched two former presidents'
- d. \*bieți -i cei foști doi președinți  
wretched -the cel former two presidents  
'the wretched two former presidents'

The [*cel* – cardinal] sequence also acts like a constituent with respect to syntactic movement of an adjective to D<sup>0</sup>: adjective movement bypasses the sequence as a syntactic unit. Provided that the adjective hosts the definite article suffix, an adjective can bypass the [*cel* – cardinal] sequence. In the grammatical DP in (13a) the prenominal adjective follows [*cel* – cardinal] sequence. Conversely, in the ungrammatical (13b) the adjective cannot precede [*cel* – cardinal], suggesting that prenominal adjectives are generated below the [*cel* – cardinal] sequence. In (13c), however, the adjective can precede [*cel* – cardinal]. Crucially, in this position, the prenominal adjective obligatorily hosts the definite suffix, c.f. (13b) and (13c). Thus, in (13c), the prenominal adjective moved to DP initial position from its generation position below [*cel* – cardinal],

indicated by the trace. In other words, movement of the adjective bypasses the [*cel* – cardinal] sequence as a syntactic unit.

- (13) a. cele două biete fete  
cel two wretched girls  
'the wretched two girls'
- b. \*biete cele două fete  
wretched cel two girls  
'the wretched two girls'
- c. biete -le cele două <sub>t<sub>A</sub></sub> fete  
wretched -the cel two girls  
'the wretched two girls'

The third reason for proposing that the [*cel*-cardinal] sequence is a phrase is that it distributes like a syntactic constituent. Specifically, [*cel* – cardinal] can occur in three distinct positions in the DP: in (14a), it occurs prenominally; in (14b), it is in postnominal position, between the noun and its complement; and in (14c), it occurs in the postnominal position, following the complement of the noun.

- (14) a. cele două fete  
cel two girls  
'the two girls'
- b. biete -le fete cele două ale Mariei  
wretched -the girls cel two of Mary  
'Mary's poor two girls'
- c. fete -le Mariei cele două  
girls -the Mary cel two  
'Mary's two girls'

## 6. The Syntactic Position and Properties of Prenominal *celP*

In this section, I claim that prenominal *celP* and demonstratives can license a covert  $D^0$  and occur in the specifier of / are adjoined to a functional phrase just below DP. This is done by showing that these two phrases have similar syntactic properties and behaviours and are in complementary distribution.

Prenominal *celP* and demonstratives can occur in DPs that are obligatorily interpreted as definite in the absence of the definite article suffix, as in (15a, b). However, since both *cel* and the demonstrative are below  $D^0$ , for the reasons provided thus far, we can presume that the DPs in (15 a, b) contain a covert [+definite]  $D^0$ .

- (15) a. [cele trei] fete  
cel three girls  
'the three girls'
- b. aceste fete  
these girls  
'these three girls'
- c. biete \*(-le) cele trei fete  
wretched -the cel three girls  
'the three wretched girls'
- d. biete \*(-le) aceste(a) fete  
wretched -the these girls  
'these wretched girls'

Importantly, in (15c, d) the demonstrative and pronominal *celP* can be preceded by an overt instance of the definite article suffix hosted by an  $A^0_A$ . Provided that the definite article suffix is in  $D^0$ , it should be assumed that the DP is projected throughout the data in (15). There is no reason to assume that nominal phrases containing pronominal *celP* or demonstratives have two significantly distinct structural variants: one that is a full DP, for (15c, d), and one that is a DP-less FP (functional phrase), for (15a, b). Rather, I propose that all examples in (15) have the same structure: they are all full DPs, and (15a, b) versus (15c, d) only differ in that  $D^0$  is covert in the former and overt in the latter. Also note that in (15c, d) the  $A^0_A$  in DP initial position, where it hosts the definite suffix, moves there from a position below *cel* or the demonstrative. Assuming the working hypothesis proposed in section 1, the DPs in (15c, d) are obtained by head movement of the  $A^0_A$  past the [*cel* – cardinal] sequence. This indicates that the [*cel* – cardinal] sequence is transparent to  $A^0_A$ -to- $D^0$  head movement, which in turn, suggests that neither pronominal *cel* nor the cardinal is an intervening head in the extended nominal projection.

The observations that  $A^0_A$  head moves to  $D^0$  past pronominal *cel*, the cardinal and the demonstrative, and the latter three categories are not intervening heads are further evidenced by the data in (16). Here, the  $A^0_A$  that does not bear the definite article can only occur below [*cel* – cardinal] or the demonstrative, in its base generation position, suggesting that  $A^0_A$ 's movement to DP initial position must bypass [*cel* – cardinal] or the demonstrative and is only warranted by  $A^0_A$ 's hosting of the definite suffix. Again, in (16a, c) pronominal [*cel* – cardinal] and the demonstrative do not block head movement past them, suggesting that they are not heads in the extended nominal projection. Moreover, (16b, d) suggest that pronominal *cel* and demonstratives occur in a position right below  $D^0$  (or very close to the DP's left periphery) since  $A^0_A$ s cannot be generated above *cel* or demonstratives. These last two observations lead to the conclusion that pronominal *cel* and demonstratives occupy the specifier of or are adjoined to a functional phrase that is right below  $D^0$ . This conclusion is reinforced by the data provided in (17) below.

- (16) a. bieți -i cei doi foști președinți  
Wretched -the cel two former presidents  
'the wretched two former presidents'
- b. \*bieți -i foști cei doi președinți  
wretched -the former cel two presidents  
'the wretched two former presidents'
- c. bieți -i acești(a) foști președinți  
wretched -the these former presidents  
'these wretched former presidents'
- d. \*bieți -i foști acești(a) președinți  
wretched -the former these presidents  
'these wretched former presidents'

Further evidence for the high syntactic position of prenominal *celP* and its parallel syntactic behavior with demonstratives is provided by co-occurrence patterns with superlative prenominal *celP*. Regular *celP* and superlative *celP* can cooccur in prenominal position provided that regular *celP* precedes the superlative *celP*, as in (17a, b).

- (17) a. [cei doi] [cei mai corupți] președinți  
cel two cel most corrupt presidents  
'the most corrupt two presidents'
- b. \*[cei mai corupți] [cei doi] președinți  
cel most corrupt cel two presidents  
'the most corrupt two presidents'
- c. [cei mai corupți] doi președinți  
cel most corrupt two presidents  
'the most corrupt two presidents'

The data in (17a, b) have two main implications. First, there are at least two syntactic prenominal positions/functional phrases below  $D^0$  available to host the two *celPs*. Second, the ordering effect suggests that regular *celPs* and superlative *celPs* have, at least partially, different syntactic properties. The validity of the last statement is reinforced by two other distribution properties of superlative *celPs*. First, superlative *celPs* can precede a simple cardinal, as in (17c).<sup>5</sup> This implies that the obligatory ordering effect in (17a) is not due to a

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<sup>5</sup> In DPs like (17c), where the prenominal superlative *celP* is the first phrase of the DP, the DP has a definite interpretation. Two possible explanations emerge: the lower *celP* position, where superlatives are generated can license a null [+def]  $D^0$ , or the superlative *celP* moves to the specifier / adjoins to the regular *celP* position that always licenses a null [+def]  $D^0$ . At this point, I do not have evidence in support of either hypothesis.

semantic constraint on superlative *cel*P's scoping over cardinals, rather it bears on the syntactic properties of regular *cel*P's with respect to superlative *cel*P's.

The second argument for the distinction between superlative *cel*P's and regular *cel*P's consists of the observation that they have a different distribution with respect to demonstratives. While demonstratives can cooccur with a superlative *cel*P as in (18a), they cannot co-occur with a regular (cardinal) *cel*P, irrespective of their relative order, as illustrated in (18b, c). Here too, the cooccurrence restriction on demonstratives and cardinal *cel*P's cannot be attributed to a semantic incompatibility between demonstratives and cardinals, since simple cardinals can cooccur with demonstratives as in (18d, e). Thus, if demonstratives and regular prenominal *cel*P compete for the same prenominal position we expect the obligatory ordering effect of regular *cel*P and superlative *cel*P to also hold for the demonstrative and superlative *cel*P. This is in fact the case, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (18f) where the superlative *cel*P precedes the demonstrative. In opposition, in its grammatical counterpart (18a), the superlative *cel*P follows the demonstrative.

- (18) a.   acești cei mai corupți președinți  
           these cel most corrupt presidents  
           ‘these most corrupt presidents’
- b.   \*aceste cele două fete  
           these cel two girls  
           ‘these two girls’
- c.   \*cele două aceste fete  
           cel two these girls  
           ‘these two girls’
- d.   aceste două fete  
           these two girls  
           ‘these two girls’
- e.   fete -le aceste(a) două  
           girls -the these two  
           ‘these two girls’
- f.   \*[cei mai corupți] [acești] președinți  
           cel most corrupt these presidents  
           ‘these most corrupt presidents’

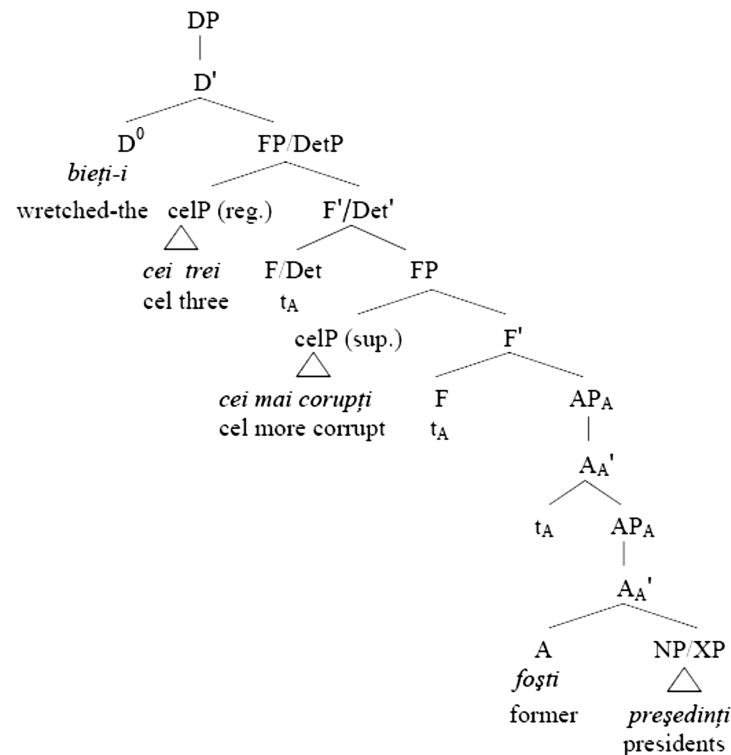
## 7. Summary of Proposal

This article claims that prenominal *cel* is not an instantiation of the definite article in the  $D^0$  position. Rather, it forms the constituent *cel*P with the immediately following phrase (a cardinal or vague adjectival numeral). It is further argued that regular prenominal *cel*P occupies a position just below DP

but above superlative *celP* and the generation site of  $AP_A$ s, possibly the specifier of or adjoined to a functional phrase, the same position occupied by demonstratives. From this position, prenominal *celP* can license a covert definite  $D^0$ , just like demonstratives. It is prenominal *celP*'s licensing capability of the null [+definite]  $D^0$  that explains the definite reading of all DPs with a prenominal *celP*. Finally, the superlative *celP* is claimed to occupy the specifier of / is a adjoined to a functional projection (FP) that is below that of the prenominal, regular *celP* or demonstrative, when present, but above the generation site of prenominal only  $A^0_A$ . The structure I propose for the DP in (19) is provided in (20). This DP contains an overt definite article suffix in  $D^0$  that is hosted by a prenominal only  $A^0_A$ , which has moved to that position:  $A^0_A$  head moves to  $D^0$  bypassing the regular and superlative *celP*s. Note that the regular *celP* is generated just below DP and above the superlative *celP*, which in turn is generated above the starting position of the left most  $A^0_A$ . This structure provides a rather detailed map of the left periphery of the Romanian DP.

- (19) a.    *bieți -i cei trei cei mai corupți foști președinți*  
 wretched -the cel three cel most corrupt former presidents  
 ‘the wretched three most corrupts presidents’

- (20) Tree for  $A^0$  bypassing prenominal *celP*s



## 8. Conclusion

The present article provides a map of the articulated structure of the left periphery of Romanian DPs. An important proposal here is that Romanian DPs only have one type of overt definite article in  $D^0$ : the suffix/enclitic *-L*. Contrary to claims in the literature, it is demonstrated here that prenominal *cel* is not a free standing instantiation of the definite article in  $D^0$ ; thus, it is not a definiteness marker nor does it occupy the  $D^0$  position. It is further proposed that prenominal *celP* occupies the specifier of a functional phrase that is just below DP but above the generation site of  $AP_{AS}$  and from this position, *celP* can license a covert definite  $D^0$ , just like demonstratives. Throughout the paper, I highlight the parallel syntactic properties and distribution of prenominal *celP* and demonstratives and demonstrated that these two categories share the same syntactic position and are in fact in complementary distribution. I interpreted these empirical generalizations to illustrate that prenominal *celP* occupies the same syntactic position as demonstratives. In fact, the analysis proposed here is compatible with and can be extended to account for the distribution of postnominal *cel* as well.

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